

collaboration among local officials and concerned citizens. I salute the entire staff, administration, and governance in the Jesup Community School District. In particular, I would like to recognize the leadership of the board of education—Staci Brown, Fritz Demuth, Leonard Harting, Roxanne Masteller, Lisa Riensche, Jim Phillips and Todd Rohlfen and former board members Gin Vogel, Kevin McCombs, Brenda Schmit, Dawn Quackenbush and Larry Thompson. I would also like to recognize superintendent Sarah Pinion, former superintendent Terry Christie, board secretary Mary Anne Harrold and the individuals involved with the Vote Yes Committee.

As we mark the 10th anniversary of the Harkin school grant program in Iowa, I am obliged to point out that many thousands of school buildings and facilities across the United States are in dire need of renovation or replacement. In my State of Iowa alone, according to a recent study, some 79 percent of public schools need to be upgraded or repaired. The harsh reality is that the average age of school buildings in the United States is nearly 50 years.

Too often, our children visit ultra-modern shopping malls and gleaming sports arenas on weekends, but during the week go to school in rundown or antiquated facilities. This sends exactly the wrong message to our young people about our priorities. We have to do better.

That is why I am deeply grateful to the professionals and parents in the Jesup Community School District. There is no question that a quality public education for every child is a top priority in that community. I salute them, and wish them a very successful new school year.●

LISBON COMMUNITY EDUCATION

● Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, in Iowa and across the United States, a new school year has begun. As you know, Iowa public schools have an excellent reputation nationwide, and Iowa students' test scores are among the highest in the Nation.

I would like to take just a few minutes today to salute the dedicated teachers, administrators, and school board members in the Lisbon Community School District, and to report on their participation in a unique Federal partnership to repair and modernize school facilities.

This fall marks the 10th year of the Iowa Demonstration Construction Grant Program. That is its formal name, but it is better known among educators in Iowa as the program of Harkin grants for Iowa public schools. Since 1998, I have been fortunate to secure a total of \$121 million for the State government in Iowa, which selects worthy school districts to receive these grants for a range of renovation and repair efforts everything from updating fire safety systems to building

new schools or renovating existing facilities. In many cases, this Federal funding is used to leverage public and/or private local funding, so it often has a tremendous multiplier effect in a local school district.

The Lisbon Community School District received a 2002 Harkin grant totaling \$1 million which it used to help build an elementary school addition and make renovations to the existing building. This school is a modern, state-of-the-art facility that befits the educational ambitions and excellence of this school district. Indeed, it is the kind of school facility that every child in America deserves. The district also received two fire safety grants totaling \$65,521 to make safety improvement throughout the building.

Excellent schools do not just pop up like mushrooms after a rain. They are the product of vision, leadership, persistence, and a tremendous amount of collaboration among local officials and concerned citizens. I salute the entire staff, administration, and governance in the Lisbon Community School District. In particular, I would like to recognize the leadership of the board of education Andy Sullivan, Eric Krob, Doren Montgomery, Dave Prasil and Connie Sproston and former board members Jeff Bohr, Scott Morningstar, Dean Mallie and Ann Opatz. I would also like to recognize superintendent Vincent Smith, former superintendent Bob Torrence, elementary principal Roger Teeling, former elementary principal Dr. George Karam, former custodian Tony Nost, technology coordinator Julie Hill, former business manager Gene Lawson, high school principal Dan Conner, John Nietupski from Grant Wood Area Education Agency, the architectural firm Neumann Monson and Dan Boggs, Tom Light, Bob Hill, Scott West and the many individuals who worked to pass the bond referendum in 2003.

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MARSHALLTOWN COMMUNITY EDUCATION

● Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, in Iowa and across the United States, a new school year has begun. As you know, Iowa public schools have an excellent reputation nationwide, and Iowa students' test scores are among the highest in the Nation.

I would like to take just a few minutes today to salute the dedicated teachers, administrators, and school board members in the Marshalltown Community School District, and to report on their participation in a unique Federal partnership to repair and modernize school facilities.

This fall marks the 10th year of the Iowa Demonstration Construction Grant Program. That is its formal name, but it is better known among educators in Iowa as the program of Harkin grants for Iowa public schools. Since 1998, I have been fortunate to secure a total of \$121 million for the State government in Iowa, which selects worthy school districts to receive these grants for a range of renovation and repair efforts—everything from updating fire safety systems to building new schools or renovating existing facilities. In many cases, this Federal funding is used to leverage public and/or private local funding, so it often has a tremendous multiplier effect in a local school district.

The Marshalltown Community School District received several Harkin grants totaling \$3,319,658 which it used to help modernize and make safety improvements throughout the district. Harkin construction grants totaling \$2.5 million have helped with renovation projects at Marshalltown High School, Miller Middle School and Anson, Woodbury, Franklin, Lenihan and Rogers Elementary Schools. These projects have included new classrooms, new roofs, and new HVAC systems. These schools are the modern facilities that befit the educational ambitions and excellence of this school district. Indeed, they are the kind of schools that every child in America deserves.

The district also received six fire safety grants totaling \$819,658 to make improvements at Marshalltown High School, Miller Middle School, and Woodbury, Rogers, Anson, Hoglan, Lenihan and Franklin Elementary Schools. The improvements included new sprinkler systems, upgraded fire alarm systems and other safety repairs. The Federal grants have made it possible for the district to provide quality and safe schools for their students.

Excellent schools do not just pop up like mushrooms after a rain. They are the product of vision, leadership, persistence, and a tremendous amount of collaboration among local officials and concerned citizens. I salute the entire staff, administration, and governance in the Marshalltown Community School District. In particular, I would like to recognize the leadership of the board of education—Pam Swarts, Kay